

How to Deal With Safe Driving Concerns You Have for a Senior

Statistics show that older drivers have fewer accidents than any other age group. But this is misleading. When actual hours on the road are taken into consideration, older drivers have the second highest accident rate, second only to teenage drivers. In addition, they are more often injured when involved in an accident. But turning in the car keys represents such a loss of independence that many seniors continue drive. The following are examples of some issues to discuss with your loved one:

- Have they been issued two or more traffic tickets or warnings in the past two years?
- Have they been involved in fender benders, or near misses?
- Do their passengers give them directions or prompts?
- Do they have difficulty merging or changing lanes?
- Do they have difficulty seeing other vehicles or pedestrians, especially at night?
- Do they miss stop signs or other traffic signals?
- Do other drivers honk or pass frequently, even when the traffic is moving slowly?
- Do they remember to buckle their seatbelt?
- Do they need a lot of room to park?
- Do they think their reaction time has slowed down?
- Are they taking any medication that could make them tired or slow their reaction time?

If the answer is yes to any of these questions and you're concerned, ask the elder's doctor to make a referral for a Drivers Evaluation Test. This simulator tests vision and reaction time. Results of a Drivers Evaluation Test are automatically sent to the Registry of Motor Vehicles.

~ Provided courtesy of Greater Springfield Senior Services, Inc.